

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are allowed. Claims 13 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). Claims 14, 15, 17 and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

1. Rejection of claims 13 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e):
Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e), for reasons of record that can be found on page 2 in the Office action identified above, which is part of paper No.20031127.

To overcome this rejection, claim 13 has been amended. The limitation in claim 17 that is found allowable by the Examiner has been added into claim 13. No new matter is introduced.

The Applicants realize that this Office action was made final. However, according to MPEP 714.12, which states: "...Any amendment that will place the application either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal may be entered." Accordingly, the Applicants suggest that the twice-amended claim 13 is now in condition for allowance, and such action is therefore politely requested.

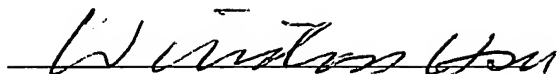
As claim 16 is dependent upon the independent claim 13, it should be allowable if the amended claim 13 is allowed. Reconsideration of claim 16 is therefore politely requested.

2. Objection to claims 14, 15 and 18:

As claims 14, 15 and 18 are dependent upon the twice-amended independent claim 13, they should be allowable if claim 13 is allowed. Reconsideration of claims 14, 15 and 18 is therefore politely requested.

Sincerely,

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